



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

MAR 18 2011

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF:

E-19J

Stephen J. Kuennen, District Ranger
Laurentian Ranger District
Superior National Forest
318 Forestry Road
Aurora, Minnesota 55707

Re: Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) for the
Proposed Tracks Vegetation Management Project, Laurentian Ranger District, Superior
National Forest, St. Louis and Lake Counties, Minnesota - EIS No. 20110061

Dear Mr. Kuennen:

In accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act, the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA Implementing Regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, we have reviewed the Final EIS and ROD for the Tracks Project. The proposed project results from the need to implement the current Forest Plan and move forest resources toward the desired future conditions for the Management Areas located in the analysis area.

EPA assigned a rating of "Lack of Objections" to the Draft EIS in our July 2, 2010 letter. Based on our review of the Final EIS, we maintain our lack of objections to the Preferred Alternative and the proposed project. Our Draft EIS comment letter requested additional information regarding the adequacy of older habitat. The response to comments included in the ROD and Section 3.7 of the Final EIS addresses this request.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Kathleen Kowal of my staff at (312) 353-5206 or via email at kowal.kathleen@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth A. Westlake", is written over a horizontal line.

Kenneth A. Westlake, Chief
NEPA Implementation Section
Office of Enforcement & Compliance Assurance

cc: Jim McDonald, Regional Environmental Coordinator, USFS, Milwaukee, WI